NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS IN RECREATION SERVICES

WORKBOOK

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NATIONAL WORK CONFERENCE

ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF BLIND AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS

IN RECREATION SERVICES IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

June 10 - 12, 1968

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American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.
New York, New York

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National Recreation and Park Association
Washington, D.C.

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Rehabilitation Services Administration
Washington, D.C.

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American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.
15 West 16th Street
New York, N.Y. 10011

The American Foundation for the Blind is a nonprofit corporation. It is governed by a Board of Trustees who serve without compensation. It is supported by income from the Helen Keller Endowment Fund, by grants from other organizations, gifts from the general public and partial returns from the sale of its publications and manufactured products.

The Foundation works in cooperation with its sister organization, the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, which provides assistance in developing programs for blind persons throughout the world.

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National Recreation and Park Association
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

The National Recreation and Park Association is a nonprofit organization concerned with improving park and recreation services and providing wholesome and meaningful leisure time opportunities for all Americans.

The focus and intent of this conference, "National Work Conference on the Employment of Blind and Visually Handicapped Persons in Recreation Services in Rural and Urban Areas", is of vital importance to the Association as part of its collective concern for the manpower needs of the recreation profession and the social and economic needs of the ill and handicapped citizen.

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Rehabilitation Services Administration
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Social and Rehabilitation Service
Washington, D.C. 20201

The Rehabilitation Services Administration administers the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. This Act provides for a nationwide federal-state system to restore disabled persons to employment. Its purpose is to help these persons, including blind and visually handicapped individuals, in selecting the type of work they are capable of performing, training for the work, and placing them in a suitable job.

This program has agencies in each state. Thirty-six states have separate rehabilitation agencies serving blind and visually impaired alone. In other states there is one rehabilitation program serving all types of disabled persons, including the blind. In addition to those who are blind, the state agencies provide services for those with badly impaired eyesight.

The Federal government administers a grants program and supplies leadership and technical information, and the actual rehabilitation services are carried out by the State agencies.

Estimated Prevalence of Legal Blindness in the U.S.,
by State as of July 1, 1960, 1962 and 1965

State	Factors Underlying Estimates: Per cent of Population: Age 65 and Over	Per cent of Population: Non-white	Infant Death Rate: 1948-52 Average	Estimated Rate per 1,000 Population 1960*	Estimated Number of Blind** 1960	1962	1965
United States	9.2	11.4	29.8	2.14	385,000	399,300	416,400
Alabama	8.0	30.1	37.7	3.08	10,100	10,400	10,700
Alaska	2.4	22.8	47.3	2.65	600	650	650
Arizona	6.9	10.2	49.1	2.53	3,350	3,850	4,100
Arkansas	10.9	21.9	29.0	2.69	4,800	4,950	5,300
California	8.8	8.0	25.8	1.84	29,150	31,300	34,350
Colorado	9.0	3.0	34.6	1.93	3,400	3,700	3,800
Connecticut	9.6	4.4	22.1	1.63	4,150	4,250	4,650
Delaware	8.0	13.9	29.0	2.13	950	1,000	1,100
D.C.	9.1	54.8	29.4	3.93	3,000	3,100	3,150
Florida	11.2	17.9	33.6	2.69	13,450	14,750	15,650
Georgia	7.4	28.6	33.6	2.84	11,200	11,700	12,450
Hawaii	4.6	68.0	24.5	3.98	2,550	2,800	2,850
Idaho	8.7	1.5	26.8	1.59	1,050	1,100	1,100
Illinois	9.7	10.6	26.1	2.03	20,550	20,700	21,700
Indiana	9.6	5.9	27.9	1.88	8,800	8,900	9,250
Iowa	11.9	1.0	25.3	1.77	4,900	4,950	4,900
Kansas	11.0	4.6	25.4	1.86	4,050	4,150	4,200
Kentucky	9.6	7.2	36.8	2.22	6,750	6,900	7,100
Louisiana	7.4	32.1	35.0	3.03	9,900	10,150	10,750
Maine	11.0	0.6	30.9	1.87	1,800	1,900	1,850
Maryland	7.3	17.0	27.6	2.16	6,750	6,900	7,650
Massachusetts	11.1	2.4	24.0	1.73	8,950	8,950	9,300
Michigan	8.2	9.4	27.5	1.91	15,000	15,300	15,750

Minnesota	10.4	1.2	24.5	1.64	5,600	5,700	5,850
Mississippi	8.7	42.3	38.9	3.68	8,000	8,300	8,550
Missouri	11.7	9.2	29.1	2.22	9,600	9,700	10,000
Montana	9.7	3.6	28.6	1.82	1,250	1,300	1,300
Nebraska	11.6	2.6	24.6	1.79	2,550	2,650	2,650
Nevada	6.4	7.7	35.4	1.95	550	650	850
New Hampshire	11.2	0.4	25.6	1.70	1,050	1,100	1,150
New Jersey	9.2	8.7	25.1	1.88	11,450	11,750	12,750
New Mexico	5.4	7.9	58.1	2.60	2,500	2,650	2,700
New York	10.1	8.9	25.1	1.96	33,000	34,200	35,550
North Carolina	6.9	25.4	35.2	2.72	12,400	12,950	13,450
North Dakota	9.3	2.0	27.7	1.69	1,050	1,100	1,100
Ohio	9.2	8.2	27.6	1.94	18,900	19,650	19,950
Oklahoma	10.7	9.5	31.0	2.22	5,200	5,450	5,550
Oregon	10.4	2.1	24.0	1.66	2,950	3,100	3,200
Pennsylvania	10.0	7.6	27.4	1.97	22,350	22,500	22,800
Rhode Island	10.4	2.4	25.2	1.71	1,450	1,500	1,600
South Carolina	6.3	34.9	39.1	3.20	7,650	7,800	8,150
South Dakota	10.5	4.0	27.2	1.85	1,250	1,350	1,300
Tennessee	8.7	16.5	36.3	2.52	9,000	9,200	9,750
Texas	7.8	12.6	39.7	2.40	23,100	24,400	25,400
Utah	6.7	1.9	24.9	1.39	1,250	1,350	1,400
Vermont	11.2	0.2	27.3	1.75	700	700	700
Virginia	7.3	20.8	36.1	2.59	10,300	10,850	11,600
Washington	9.8	3.6	26.2	1.75	5,000	5,300	5,250
West Virginia	9.3	4.9	36.5	2.09	3,900	3,750	3,800
Wisconsin	10.2	2.4	25.6	1.71	6,800	7,050	7,150
Wyoming	7.8	2.2	34.0	1.78	600	650	600

* For estimation procedure, see Appendix A and population figures, Appendix B, Table A.

** The estimated numbers are rounded to the nearest 50.

Source: Rates from Estimated Prevalence of Blindness in the United States and in Individual States, 1960, Ralph G. Hurlin, Ph.D.[7]

CAREERS IN RECREATION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Note: Much of this material is taken from the Preliminary Report on Supply and Demand Study - Professional and Pre-Professional Recreation and Park Occupations, National Recreation and Park Association, and Administration on Aging - Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Donald E. Hawkins, Project Director.

There is a need to provide opportunity and involvement in the environment of work further to consolidate and stabilize the results of the efforts being made to extend the potential of the blind person to contribute to his society.

The primary objective of this report is to provide guidelines for the blind and visually handicapped person. This includes commercial, public and/or private recreation services, programs and facilities.

Stereotyped attitudes and opinions as well as other factors have limited any substantial consideration of the blind or visually handicapped person as a manpower resource in the recreation field. The observations and experiences of persons familiar with the competencies of blind persons lead us to believe that they can function both responsibly and productively as employees. There is no valid reason not to believe that the blind person can benefit from the same stimulation and sense of well-being that the average person experiences as a result of gainful employment.

A firm commitment is needed fully to investigate and evaluate the premise that the blind person can, with training and counseling, meet the demands necessary to become active in the labor market. This project offers the opportunity for those concerned with recreation services and those concerned with the rehabilitation of the blind person to join together in fulfilling such a commitment.

What is the present supply and demand for jobs in the recreation and park field that are likely to become accessible to the blind person? Of continuous importance is the stimulation of entry into the professional ranks of recreation practitioner through normal patterns of educational preparation. Every effort in the area of manpower development and training in the field of recreation should offer accessibility to these formal education opportunities for the individual who wishes to acquire professional competencies and credentials.

However, as a basic beginning point, we might be wise to limit our consideration to the preparation of the blind and visually handicapped for immediate entry into the field at the recreation aide or attendant category, or other closely related service occupations. In the end this might offer a most effective means of recruiting these persons into the field as professionals.

Many such positions exist in the recreation field -- for example, full-time equivalent employment of service-level workers in 1967 totaled approximately 49,191 for semi-skilled workers and 135,229 for attendants and aides in local public park and recreation departments. Other full-time equivalent employment figures for service occupations in other settings utilizing recreation services include:

..Older Citizens Programs
Attendants, program aides, companions for leisure -- 1,056

..State and other public hospitals and institutions
Recreation aides, equipment managers, program assistants, musician aides, arts and crafts aides -- 2,923

..Voluntary non-profit agencies
Camping - craft leaders or assistants musician aides or leaders, cooks helper, arts and crafts -- 6,900
College unions - maintenance, music -- 4,722
American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboretums - maintenance, attendants, etc. -- 64

..Zoos and Aquariums
Assistant keepers, maintenance -- 1,900

..Armed Forces recreation (civilian)
Army-Navy - Air Force-Navy any of above -- 5,430

New job opportunities for the blind person can be created to fill the gap brought about by labor turnover (approximately 5% per year) and new demands for service workers (estimated at 11% annual increase in the public sector alone).

The potential for training with the Manpower Development and Training Act and other existing government training resources is enormous. With the steady upward growth trend in the public, commercial, and private non-profit recreation sectors of the field, MDTA can help meet the deman subsequently being created for additional workers. It has been estimated that by 1970, a minimum of approximately 17,000 personnel need to be trained to meet the serious deficit of service workers in the recreation and park field just to provide services to older citizens.

A variety of employment opportunities now exist in parks, conservation areas, zoos and aquariums, institutions and commercial settings. They include:

gardeners
turf grass specialist
tree trimmers
park equipment operators
zookeepers
activity assistants
equipment dispensers
snack bar operators
bowling alley attendants
ski lift aides
ranch hands (dude)
locker room attendants (pools, golf courses, etc.)
equipment attendant:
  swimming pools
  beaches
  tennis courts
  lakes (fishing)
  boat rental

A comparatively small number of individuals have been trained for recreation and park service-level occupations. The list below is suggestive of the variety of occupations in the forestry field alone and the number of persons that have been trained to fill them since 1962.

Foresters	80
Forester Aides	767
Gardeners	660
Ground Keepers	522
Hunting & Fishing Guides	20
Landscape Gardeners	411
Nurserymen	585
Park Caretakers	18
Playground workers	50
Tree Pruners	1,209
Tree Trimmers	72

Most of the above jobs could be made available to properly trained blind or visually handicapped persons.

JOBS REPORTED BEING PERFORMED BY VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS IN RECREATION SERVICES IN THIRTEEN STATES AS OF MAY 15, 1968

Title	Range of Amount of Vision
Activity Supervisor	Limited Reading of Ink Print
Automatic Pinsetter (Maintenance Man)	Totally Blind
Boat Livery - Cabin Rental	Totally Blind
Boat Livery - Maintenance	Limited Reading of Ink Print
Camp Counselor	Totally Blind
Camp Counselor	Travel Vision
Camp Counselor	Totally Blind
Camp Counselor	Limited Reading of Ink Print
Craft Teacher	Totally Blind
Director - Recreation	Light Perception
Director - Recreation	Travel Vision
Director - Recreation (mentally retarded)	Limited Reading of Ink Print
Director - Recreation (mentally retarded)	Limited Reading of Ink Print
Fishing Guide	Limited Reading of Ink Print
Manager - Dude Ranch	Totally Blind
Manager - Miniature Golf	Limited Reading of Ink Print
Manager - Miniature Golf	Light Perception
Operator - State Lake Concessions	Limited Reading of Ink Print
Pin Boy - Bowling Alley	Travel Vision
Recreation Organizer	Light Perception
Recreation Specialist (Music and Drama)	Limited Reading of Ink Print
Supervisor - Recreation Activity Program	Limited Reading of Ink Print

THE EMPLOYMENT OF BLIND AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS IN THE UNITED STATES

The definition of blindness most frequently used by state and federal governments is: "Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye, with correcting glasses; or central acuity of more than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees."

In layman's language this means that if a person can only identify at 20 feet what a person with normal vision can recognize at 200 feet, or if his field of vision is so restricted that he can only see a small area at a time, then he is legally blind.

Thus legal blindness does not mean being totally blind. About 80 per cent of those who are legally blind have some residual vision and can make good use of the remaining sight which they have.

No accurate statistics exist on the number of blind men, women and children in the United States, but it is estimated that the number is approximately 430,000. Nearly 50% of these are 65 years of age or older. At least 10% are under the age of 21. The remaining 40% or 172,000 are of the commonly accepted employable age between 21 and 65. Of this number, 107,500 are employed in some type of remunerative work or are housewives who are not interested in employment. 21,500 are in the process of being prepared for employment, and the remaining 43,000 represent the group for whom professional workers have not yet developed the skill and knowledge to assist them to plan to enter the labor market.

It is hard today to find a job category in which blind persons are not active. Many blind youths are going to college to prepare for a profession and blind men and women are now employed in offices, on farms and in factories.

For example, some of these jobs are:

Taxi Dispatcher	Chemical Engineer
Switchboard Operator	Agency Executive
Dairy Farmer	Business Manager
Darkroom Technician	Employment Interviewer
Social Worker	Transcriber-Typist
Psychologist	Teacher
Musician	Physicist

What does employment mean? To a blind person and his family - personal independence leading to respect for the individual; healthier, stronger relationships. To the employer - a blind person on the right job will be (according to established findings) equal to the sighted worker in production, attendance and safety. To his community and his country - greater production, tax payments, and participation by all in community life.

The following pages in this workbook are intended to assist you to consolidate your notes in order that you may be of maximum help to your committee chairman in the preparation of your committee report.

You will note that a number of questions have been prepared for the purpose of guiding the deliberations of each committee. It will be appreciated if you will discuss and attempt to answer all of these questions before you prepare the final report of your committee which is to be presented to the total group Wednesday morning, June 12th. Each question is followed by two blank pages to be used for note taking.

1. What are the jobs for which people are employed in recreation services? Identify these jobs as full-time seasonal, part-time seasonal, full-time year round or part-time year round.

2. To what extent does visual efficiency relate to successful performance in each job previously listed?

3. What are the training and/or the educational requirements for entry into each job?

4. What are the possibilities for advancement in each job?

5. What are the educational and/or training resources and facilities to prepare for entry into each job?

6. Who provides the education and/or training resources and facilities to prepare for entry into each job?

A G E N D A

NATIONAL WORK CONFERENCE ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF BLIND PERSONS IN RECREATION SERVICES IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND, INC. - NEW YORK CITY

JUNE 10 - 12, 1968

Sponsors: American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.
New York, N.Y.

National Recreation and Park Association
Washington, D.C.

Rehabilitation Services Administration
Department of HEW
Washington, D.C.

This Institute is Financed in Part by VRA Grant 68-19

MONDAY, JUNE 10

9:15 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. POLLY THOMSON ROOM - First Floor

Chairman: Marion V. Wurster

"Opening Greetings"

M. Robert Barnett
Dr. Sal Prezioso
George Magers

Introduction of Participants:

Tour of Foundation Facilities:

10:45 a.m. - 12:00 m. POLLY THOMSON ROOM

Chairman: R.Roy Rusk

Dr. Elliot Avedon
"The Employment of Blind Persons in Recreation Services"

Clayton Morgan
"Vocational Rehabilitation Services - A Manpower Resource"

Arthur L. Voorhees
"Conference Orientation"

1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Group Meetings

Group I: Polly Thomson Room

employment in non-institutional recreation settings
recreation as primary function

James E. Arles
Jerry Dunlap
John Fiorino
Dr. Virginia Frye - Chmn
Fred Martin
Orianna Syphax
Elliott Young

Group II: Robert Irwin Room - First Floor

institutional settings
residence (hospitals
homes
mentally ill
retarded
penal inst.
orphanages.

Doris Berryman
Floyd Cargill
Dr. Clayton Morgan
Janet Pomeroy
Miss Phyllis Thompson
Henry Williams - Chmn
Marion Wurster
Ralph Byron

Group III: Conference Room III - Third Floor

Commercial activities
industry or Sm. business

Mary Fortune
Joseph Halper
Cornelius Lambert
George Magers
Karl Munson
Bernard Preuss chair
Henry Swan

TUESDAY, JUNE 11

9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Group I - Polly Thomson Room

Group II - Robert Irwin Room

Group III - Helen Keller Room, South - Second Floor

Lunch Time to be Decided Upon by Each Group

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 m. Polly Thomson Room

Presentation and Discussion of Committee Reports

Adjournment

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	DATE DUE		

AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND
15 WEST 16th STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10011